(Lakdawala formula). However, by eliminating the impact of the state-sponsored food subsidy scheme, the Planning Commission has raised the poverty ratio of Andhra Pradesh from 22.19% to 25.68% for exclusive use in the matter of allocation of foodgrain under Targeted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS).

**Installation of medical gas pipe line at ESI hospital in Bangalore**

*157. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal for installation of medical gas pipe line to start the Cardiothoracic unit of the Employees State Insurance Hospital at Indirapuram, Bangalore, submitted by the State Government is pending with Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when a decision is expected to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA) (a) and (b) No such proposal is pending with the Government of India. However, the ESI Corporation had received a revised request from the Government of Karnataka to accord its concurrence for installing a medical gas pipeline at the ESI Hospital, Indiranagar, Bangalore. The approval of ESIC has recently been conveyed to the State Government.

**Women workers in Government sector**

*158. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of women employees in Government sector has come down:

(b) the percentage of women at present in PSU banks and other PSUs; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to increase the number of women employees in these organizations?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The percentage of women employees in Public Sector Undertaking Banks and other Public Sector Undertakings as on 31st March, 2001 is approximately 10%.

(c) The right to equal opportunity for women to seek employment in Government including Public Sector Undertakings is enshrined in the Constitution itself and there is no discrimination in this regard on gender basis.

**Sugar buffer stock**

*159. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers are lobbying for sugar buffer stock;

(b) if so, the details of their proposals; and

(c) the action proposed by Government on the farmers' suggestions?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) While no suggestion have been received, individually, from farmers in this behalf, a Buffer Stock of 20 lakh tonnes of sugar has recently been created for a period of one year. As a result thereof, there will be an outgo of Rs. 412 crores from the Sugar Development Fund, in addition to which about Rs. 374 crores are expected to be released by Banks on account of the Buffer Stock. Thus about Rs. 786 crores would become available to the sugar industry for the payment of cane price dues to the farmers.

**Modifications in rice export policy**

†*160. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any modifications have been made recently in the rice export policy;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof and percentage of 'broken rice' allowed to be exported; and

(c) the steps taken to make export of Indian rice competitive?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.